AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 2, line 28 with the following rewritten version:

A ~~thrush~~ thrust washer is usually disposed in the axial direction between an inner peripheral portion of the front cover and a turbine hub. The thrust washer functions to support the thrust load of the turbine. In addition, a plurality of grooves are formed in an end surface in the axial direction of the thrust washer that radially extend through the thrust washer so that the working fluid can flow between the front chamber of the torque converter and the oil passage of the main drive shaft via these grooves (see, for example, Japanese Unexamined Patent Application Publication No. H05-231495).

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 6, line 22 with the following rewritten version:

~~Fig. 1~~ The Figure shows a cross section of a torque converter according to one embodiment of the present invention.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 6, line 25 with the following rewritten version:

A cross section of a torque converter 1 according to an embodiment of the present invention is shown in ~~Fig. 1~~ the Figure. Line O-O in ~~Fig. 1~~ the Figure is the rotational axis of the torque converter 1.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 8, line 21 with the following rewritten version:

A support portion 48 is formed on a inner peripheral portion of the piston unit 41a of the piston 41, and more specifically, is formed on the innermost peripheral portion thereof (the portion that continues from the cylindrical portion 43). The support portion 48 supports the thrust load of the turbine 4. The support portion 48 is an annular portion having a constant radial width, and includes a flat surface 48a on the flange 24 side which extends perpendicular to the rotation axis O - O. In addition, the flange 24 has a flat surface 24a on the support portion 48 side. The flat surfaces 48a and 24a can be axially spaced from each other. However, the flat surfaces 48a and 24a are in contact with each other when the lockup clutch is in the released state shown in ~~Fig. 1~~ the Figure, and are also in contact with each other when the lockup clutch is in the engaged state (described below). In other words, the flat surfaces 48a and 24a of the support portion 48 and the flange 24 form a contact support portion 65. The support portion 48 has a radial width that is larger than the thickness of the piston 41, and is at least two or more times as large as the thickness of piston 41. The radial width of the support portion 48 is preferably in a range three or four times larger (or more) than the thickness of the piston 41.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 9, line 4 with the following rewritten version:

A transmission side surface 63 of the inner peripheral portion of the front cover 2 and an engine side surface 23b of the turbine hub 23 are opposing portions that face each other across an axial space. There are no other members disposed between the transmission side surface 63 and the engine side surface 23b, i.e., the transmission side surface 63 and the

engine side surface 23b directly face each other in the axial direction. ~~Fig. 1~~ The Figure shows a state in which the lockup clutch 6 is released, and in particular shows a state in which the piston 41 has moved to the furthest position away from the front cover 2 (a state in which the piston 41 has moved in the axial direction to the greatest extend possible toward the transmission side). Accordingly, a first axial space 71 of a size G1 is maintained between the friction surface 62 and the friction facing 61 in the clutch coupling portion 66, and a second axial space 72 of a size G2 is maintained between the transmission side surface 63 and the engine side surface 23b. Since G1 is much smaller than G2, an axial space can be maintained between the transmission side surface 63 of the inner peripheral portion of the front cover 2 and the engine side surface 23b of the turbine hub 23 in the clutch engaged state, even when bending or deflection occurs in the piston 41. Note that in this embodiment, the axial position of the end of the inner peripheral cylindrical portion 43 of the piston 41 matches with the axial position of the engine side surface 23b of the turbine hub 23.